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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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Farmers

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SOURCE

According to Prague radio broadcasts on 16 Mar 52, the Union of Czechoslovak Farmers (Jednotny Svaz Ceskych Zemedelcu - JSCZ) was liquidated. It seems to me that the reason that this organization was liquidated was because it had fulfilled the main purpose for which it was created in 1945. It was a kind of agricultural trade union, an organization of small and medium land owners. After world War II this organization was instrumental in recruiting a substantial number of these land owners for the very moderate Communist program which preceded the Communist coup. Communists had infiltrated the union and in the last free elections in Czechoslovakia, in the Spring of 1947, the CP captured more votes among the farmers than among the urban voters. Shortly after the coup, however, when the Communists launched their vigorous collectivization program, JSCZ rapidly began to lose its importance to the Party. JSCZ was used principally for propaganda; the farmers were the first to be "cured" of their dreams. They simply used JSCZ as an excuse to get together so that the organization gradually became useless and even dangerous to the CP. The officers were frequently purged. It seems probable that the farmers used their local chapters as an excuse for illegal activities, such as political discussions and mutual advice on how to resist collectivization. The case was different with the industrial trade unions with their reliable Communist officials. I believe that there must have been an extreme shortage of people in each village to watch against further activities of the JSCZ; this is, no doubt another reason for the JSCZ's liquidation.

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